

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, IC
SUBJECT: ALL-PARTY GOVERNMENT ATEMPT

REF: REYKJAVIK 1008 DTG 021704Z AUG 78

1. WE UNDERSTAND INDEPENDENCE PARTY (IP) CHAIRMAN GEIR HALLGRIMSSON IS MEETING TODAY WITH PARTY PARLIAMENTARY GROUP AND INTENDS FORMALLY TO BURY NOTION OF FOUR-PARTY COALITION WHICH HAS OCCASIONALLY FIGURED IN DISCUSSIONS FOR NEXT COALITION GOVERNMENT. SINCE ALL-PARTY GOVERNMENT PROPOSAL WAS GIVEN COOL RECEPTION FROM START BY SOCIAL DEMOCRATS (SDP), PROGRESSIVES (PP), AND PEOPLE'S ALLIANCE (PA), ITS DEMISE AS RESULT TODAY'S IP MEETING WILL NOT SURPRISE ANYONE. MEMBER OF IP PARLIAMENTARY GROUP HAS TOLD EMBOFF THAT PARTY ACTUALLY HAD ONLY PUT FORTH PROPOSAL AS TACTICAL MANEUVER AND HAD FULLY EXPECTED IT TO BE REJECTED, THEREBY CLEARING WAY FOR THREE-WAY TALKS AMONG IP, SDP, AND PP. AFTER IP GROUP GIVES ITS EXPECTED STAMP OF APPROVAL TO THREE-PARTY TALKS (PP
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AGREED TO SUCH TALKS AT MEETING AGUSUT 4), NEGOTIATIONS COULD BEGIN WITHIN FEW DAYS ASSUMING SDP ALSO CONCURS AT PARTY MEETING SCHEDULED FOR AUGUST 10.

2. THREE-PARTY COALITION EXCLUDING PA IS NOT, HOWEVER, PREFERRED OPTION OF ANY OF THE PARTIES. MANY IN PP WOULD STILL LIKE TO SIT THIS GOVERNMENT OUT AND RECOVER FROM

ELECTORAL LOSSES; IP MEMBERS HAVE SERIOUS DOUBTS ABOUT UTILITY OF JOINING WITH PP AGAIN AFTER ITS OWN ELECTORAL SETBACK; AND SDP BELIEVES PROPOSED THREE-PARTY COALITION MEANS PARTY WOULD RUN RISK OF BEING ONLY APPENDAGE OF PRESENT IP-PP GOVERNMENT. MEMBERS OF ALL THREE PARTIES ADMIT THEY COULD PROBABLY COME TO FUNDAMENTAL AGREEMENT ON ISSUES AND POLICIES FOR NEW COALITION. HOWEVER, SINCE EACH PARTY FEELS THAT IT HAS TURF TO PROTECT, THIS WILL CONTINUE MAKE NEGOTIATIONS DIFFICULT.
BLAKE

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